

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING – 30 JANUARY 2003**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ed Bell (Designee of Cara Metz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Historical Commission)  
Marcie Bilinski (Dive Community Representative)  
Brendan Foley (Marine Archaeologist) – abstained from voting pending reappointment  
John Hoagland (Dive Community Representative)  
Lenny Loparto (Designee of Brona Simon, State Archaeologist)  
Elizabeth Dolan (Designee of Richard Murray, Director of Environmental Law Enforcement)  
Joseph Pelczarski (Designee of Thomas Skinner, Director of Coastal Zone Management)  
Victor Mastone, Director (Staff for the Board)  
David Trubey, Deputy Director (Staff for the Board)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kevin Mooney (Designee of Nancy Thornton, Director of DEM Division of Waterways)  
Terry French (Designee of John Warner, State Archivist)

**PROCEEDINGS:**

The public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources was convened by the Director, Victor Mastone at 1:30 PM on 30 January 2003 in the CZM Conference Room at 251 Causeway Street, Boston.

**1. MINUTES**

**A. Minutes of 5 December 2002**

Victor asked the Board if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the public meeting held on 5 December 2002. There were no comments or corrections to the minutes.

Ed Bell moved to accept the minutes of the 5 December 2002 public meeting. John Hoagland seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

**2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**A. Fiscal 03 Budget**

Victor stated that he has no new information regarding changes to the budget for Fiscal Year 03, but that things do not look good at this time.

**3. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

John Hoagland expressed his thanks to the Board for the opportunity to attend the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference earlier this month. He stated that he found the sessions to be very interesting and allowed him to make some new contacts. On behalf of the Board, Victor acknowledged John's gratitude and added that he had hoped the Board could have sent more of its members, but that the fiscal situation did not allow it.

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: OUTREACH**

**A. Society for Historical Archaeology Conference**

Victor reported that he, David Trubey and John Hoagland attended the Society for Historical Archaeology's (SHA) 36 Annual Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology held on January 14-19, 2003 in Providence, RI. Victor noted that he and Dr. Susan Langley of the Maryland Historical Trust's Maritime Archaeology Program, co-chaired the

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underwater sessions while he and Chris Amer of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology co-chaired the Annual International Underwater Resource Managers' Forum. This year's forum was entitled Government Maritime Managers' Forum XII: Hard Up in a Clinch and No Knife to Cut the Seizing. The session, which was very well attended, provided an opportunity for state managers to discuss current challenges in resource protection and develop strategies. Victor stated that the programs for most states are also suffering from major budget cuts and restrictions. He noted that the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Commonwealth Museum had a table at the conference and that the literature they were distributing was well received.

**B. Boston Sea Rovers**

Victor reminded the Board that he and a colleague, Dr. Susan Langley of Maryland, have been invited to speak at the Boston Sea Rovers Underwater Clinic on 9 March as part of a discussion on the development of avocational underwater archaeology programs. Victor will discuss the Board's involvement with volunteers, while Dr. Langley will present information regarding the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society (MAHS). Representatives from Delaware and Connecticut will also be part of the panel and will discuss volunteer programs in those states. Victor noted that the invitation to speak at the clinic seems to represent a new interest in marine archaeology for the Sea Rovers organization.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Bassings Cove Maritime Association**

Victor reported that Bassings Cove Maritime Association (BCMA) had submitted an Excavation Permit renewal application and Annual Report, but missed the deadline for today's meeting. He noted that BCMA missed only missed the deadline by a day or two. He recommended that given the permittees longstanding efforts, the Board extend this permit until its next public meeting scheduled for 27 March 2003.

John Hoagland moved to extend the Excavation Permit (91-001) held by Bassings Cove Maritime Association for its site in Scituate until the Board's next public meeting scheduled for 27 March 2003. Lenny Loparto seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

**B. Neil Good**

Victor reported that Neil Good had submitted his Reconnaissance Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations. Victor reminded the Board that Mr. Good's permit was set to expire on 26 October 2002. As there were no meetings scheduled for October and November 2002, the Board voted to extend the permit until the next public meeting on 5 December 2002. At the request of Mr. Good due to personal reasons, the Board voted to extend his permit until today's meeting. Mr. Good was in attendance to present his renewal application.

Mr. Good stated that he had prepared a Power Point presentation detailing aspects of his research, but that because of time restraints, he thought it might be better to show it after the meeting. He stated that he found out in a discussion held prior to the meeting, that two of the Board members are aware of one of his research interests in Waquoit Bay, the theory of a Norse discovery of America. He stated that there is a tremendous amount of information that supports the theory that Norsemen and women sailed as far south as southern New England. He noted that while evidence supporting this claim does not exist at this time, it might exist some day and it is important to keep an open mind regarding the subject.

Mr. Good disclosed to the Board the personal reasons that prevented him from submitting his renewal application and Annual Report by the deadline and assured the members that the problem has been rectified. Concerning future research of Waquoit Bay, he stated that the Falmouth Historical Commission, of which he is a member, has adopted the idea of conducting a remote sensing survey and has set aside one thousand dollars for this task. He noted that the Commission is also soliciting the participation of scientists from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) and the U.S. Geological Service in serving on a sub committee of the Commission to help supervise the project. Responses have been received from members of WHOI and the National Geographic Society Committee for Research and Exploration. Mr. Good stated that a lot of people are interested in the subject of early European exploration of America and the

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potential survey of Waquoit Bay. He concluded by expressing his hope that the Board will renew his permit so that he can continue with the project.

Ed Bell expressed the significance of soliciting the involvement of the Native American community in this project. He encouraged Mr. Good to continue developing a strong research strategy that will allow him to pursue the different avenues of research concerning the history of Waquoit Bay in a logical manner. He also stressed the importance of analyzing research regarding early European exploration of the area with a balance of skepticism and open mindedness. Ed stated that while he recognizes that Mr. Good's research and political strategies have been good so far in providing for remote sensing and developing a constituency base, it is important that he focus on what is known about the area and deemphasize that which is conjectured. He noted that evidence exists for Native American habitation of the area and utilization of the bay by different peoples in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He stated that this evidence should form the core of Mr. Good's project. Ed added that if in the course of developing and executing a research strategy based on this evidence, Mr. Good does in fact discover evidence of an earlier occupation of the area, that would certainly be a major development worthy of considerable attention. Ed stated that it is critical that Mr. Good remain sensitive to the feelings of the Native Americans concerning their culture and history in this area and noted that it is all too often overlooked.

Mr. Good acknowledged Ed's comments and stressed that he has given consideration to the history and culture of the Native Americans since the beginning of the project and will continue to maintain close communication, albeit informally, with the local tribal organizations.

Mr. Good turned the Board's attention to Cyprian Southack's New England Coastal Pilot chart, published in 1717. He pointed out the fact that this chart indicates that Horseshoe Shoal in Nantucket Sound went dry at low tide. He stressed that this is the only shoal area south of Cape Cod where this happens and related this phenomenon to a passage from the *Greenlander's Saga*, which according to Mr. Good, is considered to be the earliest written record of voyages to North America. The passage states that a ship navigated by Leif Erikson and his men sailed west into a sound comprised of numerous shoals and at low tide, this ship was left "high and dry." According to Mr. Good, the *Saga* continues to say that the men went ashore at a place where "a river ran out from a lake". He stated that numerous scholars who have studied the writing have concluded that southern New England, Cape Cod in particular, best matches the geographical characteristics described in this account. Mr. Good stated that he believes that Johannes Tornoe, a Norwegian Historian, may have been correct when he stated in 1964, that Waquoit Bay could be the lake that is described in the *Greenlander Saga*. Mr. Good added that he would like to continue researching this idea.

Ed Bell suggested that Mr. Good summarize the research he has conducted relating to this hypothesis and present it to the Board in his Annual Report. Mr. Good agreed that this would be beneficial and stated that he would do so.

Victor conveyed to Mr. Good that in renewing this permit, the Board is not setting an opinion as to the potential existence of a Norse site in Waquoit Bay. He stated that while the Board is open to the possibility, it wants Mr. Good to recognize that there is a broad spectrum of opinions on this subject and that, as difficult as it may be, he should examine as many opinions as possible and not get focused on just one.

Ed Bell moved to renew the Reconnaissance Permit (00-002) held by Neil Good for his East Falmouth/Mashpee site with all standard conditions in effect and the further conditions that no collecting of artifacts be undertaken under this permit, the permittee coordinate his activities with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) staff at Waquoit Bay, and the permittee maintain regular communication with the DEM archaeologist, DEM ACEC program, the Mashpee Tribal Council, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) THPO. Elizabeth Dolan seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

**C. Restoration Project, Inc.**

Victor reported that Restoration Project, Inc. (RPI) had submitted its Reconnaissance Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations. Eloise Newell and Kevin Kennedy of RPI were in attendance to present the application.

Mr. Kennedy thanked the Board for consideration of RPI's permit renewal and thanked Victor Mastone, David Trubey and Chris Hugo for their assistance during the course of the year. Mr. Kennedy stated that much of the success of

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RPI's project to date can be attributed to the help it has received from a wide range of people from the landowner at the pond, to the Board, and several individuals and organizations in between. As the project moves forward, and if the piano is located, RPI expects that many of same people will continue to offer assistance and guidance.

In order to bring the Board up to date on latest fieldwork activities, Victor presented a charted image of the magnetometer data collected in November 2002 by John Fish of American Underwater Search and Survey. He stated that although the RPI and the Board have not had an opportunity to discuss interpretive details of the survey with Mr. Fish, there are tentative plans to ground truth some of the anomalies in the spring. He added that there might be an opportunity to utilize ground penetrating radar at the pond before the ice melts in the spring. Chris Hugo stated that he would like to begin planning a late winter or early spring dive now that the coordinates for the magnetic anomalies are available and the data has been processed. Victor stated that given the unusual nature of this project, it has been enjoyable for the Board and has been pleased with the methodical manner in which RPI has progressed with the work. He also recognized Chris Hugo's efforts in bringing such a large number of volunteers together.

Ed Bell suggested that RPI not set its expectations or the expectations of others too high for the recovery of an intact piano. He stressed that if the piano is in fact in the pond and can be located and recovered, it will likely be fragmented and in very poor condition.

Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Newell acknowledged Ed's suggestion. Ms. Newell recalled the field searches that took place over the course of the year and remarked at the tremendous amount of press that the project received, including stories in 86 newspapers, the Today Show, and numerous other television broadcasts. She pointed out to the Board that the story that is conveyed and the resultant expectations of the public are not entirely in the hands of RPI. She noted that often times, RPI and its mission were not even mentioned in the media coverage. Ms. Newell stated that part of the thrill of this whole project was watching John Fish conducting the magnetometer survey. The attention he gave to his work was as if he was looking for something far more significant and powerful. Ms. Newell stated that RPI can take no responsibility for the success of the project thus far, as it seems to have ignited everyone's imagination and generated a tremendous level of volunteering. She concluded by explaining that eventually RPI would like to turn this project into an anti stigma campaign called "It Takes a Community to Cure a Curse" that will investigate the concept of self fulfilling prophecy and the significance of community support and perception in the context of dealing with mental illness.

Elizabeth Dolan moved to renew the Reconnaissance Permit (02-001) held by Restoration Project, Inc. for its Willis Pond site with all standard conditions in effect and the further condition that Restoration Project, Inc. coordinate its activities with the Department of Environmental Management staff archaeologist. John Hoagland seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.**

Victor reported that the Board had received a new Reconnaissance Permit application in accordance with the Board's regulations from the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL) of Pawtucket, RI. The application is for an archaeological survey of Slaters Pond in Oxford prior to proposed repairs of a 220 – foot long dam and spillway to be undertaken by the Town of Oxford. Victor reminded the Board that it has worked closely in the past with PAL on several projects including the recently completed Hubline pipeline survey. He added that as part of the Board's capital line item, it is required to support an archaeological investigation of Slaters Pond. Holly Herbster, Project Archaeologist, was in attendance to present the project, which is being conducted under the auspices of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Ms. Herbster explained that she and Suzanne Cherau, who is serving as the project's Principal Investigator, have already completed a terrestrial survey of the area involved in the proposed repair work. The survey identified one isolated piece of lithic chipping debris near the dam in a disturbed context. She noted that there is a previously identified prehistoric archaeological site along the shores of the pond, but that information concerning its location was vague. Ms. Herbster stated that based on information obtained from a site form on file at the MHC, artifacts have been collected from the shores of the pond at various times over the last one hundred or so years, presumably during periods of low water when the shoreline is more exposed. One of the find sites is described as a campsite, which raises the possibility that prehistoric period deposits may be identified during a drain down of the pond required to complete repairs to the dam.

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PAL, Inc., in consultation with the MHC, has proposed to conduct an intensive walkover surface survey to locate potential archaeological deposits including artifacts, features, or areas that exhibit a high probability of containing subsurface archaeological resources. The locations of such finds and areas will be recorded with a handheld GPS unit and mapped prior to the water level of the pond being raised to its normal level. If archaeologically sensitive areas are identified through this survey, PAL, Inc. will work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the MHC to develop and execute measures that will protect these areas from the destructive force of re-inundation. Ms. Herbster added that the walkover survey will be conducted in coordination with the Nipmuc Tribal Council. Rae Gould, the Nipmuc Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, will likely be present. Ms. Herbster added that the fieldwork has not yet been scheduled and is dependent on the timing of the draw down.

Ed Bell asked Ms. Herbster if the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has provided any information as to how much lead time PAL, Inc. will be provided prior to the water level being lowered, so that the survey crew will have ample time to mobilize. Ms. Herbster stated that there would be some lead time, but that the Town of Oxford will also be involved with the scheduling. She stated that PAL, Inc. would notify the interested parties when a date and time is set. She added that a complete technical report detailing the results of the terrestrial survey as well as the proposed sub shoreline survey would be prepared and submitted to both the MHC and the Board upon completion of the project. Ed Bell stated that, as the compromised dam represent hazard to public safety, the MHC is working hard to keep permitting delays of this project to a minimum.

Lenny Loparto stated that when he first read the proposal for this project, in particular, the recommendation of a surface survey, it concerned him that the high level of sedimentation, typical of mill ponds in New England, would make it unlikely that any archaeological materials would be located. He stated that Ms. Herbster's presentation clarified any confusion in that the surface survey is intended to locate any materials that may be exposed to the force of the changing water levels so that they may be protected. He added that Brona Simon, the State Archaeologist, is satisfied with the proposal and issued the appropriate permit from the MHC.

Lenny Loparto moved to grant the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. a Reconnaissance Permit (03-001) for its Slaters Pond site with all standard conditions in effect. Joe Pelczarski seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

Joe Pelczarski moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:13 PM. Ed Bell seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Victor T. Mastone  
Director